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SIPDIS

C O R R E C T I V E D C O P Y (ADDING COLLECTIVE)

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E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [SNAR](#) [UK](#)  
SUBJECT: INCSR PART III FOR UK

REF STATE 155254

¶1. Following is part III of the INCSR for the UK. As previously notified to the Dept, the UK agency responsible for precursor monitoring, the Home Office Drugs Branch, has declined to supply the embassy with specific information about precursor production and exports. An official at the Home Office explained that EU member states were collectively deciding on how to respond to the US request in reftel. Information below concerning licensing and control procedures is from the Home Office's website ([http://www.drugs.gov.uk/drugs-laws/licensing /](http://www.drugs.gov.uk/drugs-laws/licensing/)).

¶2. Begin Text:

Volume III: Methamphetamine Precursors

United Kingdom

The United Kingdom has a multilayered system for ensuring the production of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine is not diverted for illicit uses. The system is administered and implemented by the Home Office's Drugs Branch and follows guidelines set out by the European Parliament and the European Council (EC No 273/2004). The system consists of domestic possession/supply licenses, import/export licenses, inspections, and the use of compliance officers to meet the mandate set by the EC regulation.

According to the EC regulation both ephedrine and pseudoephedrine are category I drugs. Domestic entities, whether wholesalers, manufacturers or suppliers, are required to hold domestic licenses before they can import or export ephedrine or pseudoephedrine. This requirement does not apply, however, to freight carriers as long as they are shipping the chemicals in the course of their normal business. For companies with affiliates in other EU countries, it is sufficient to provide the Home Office with the details of the sister company to which the item is being sent and to receive a customer declaration from the receiving company. The Home Office requires that all companies keep all documentation for a period of three years readily available for inspection upon request.

The Home Office's Drugs Branch conducts surprise inspections on companies that are known to use, supply or create precursor chemicals. In addition to inspections, the UK, following EC regulations, requires each entity to designate compliance officers. These officers are tasked with ensuring the entity's compliance with UK and relevant international laws. The only requirement for a compliance officer is that he or she should be empowered to represent the operator and take decisions necessary for ensuring that the trade is in compliance with the Regulation.

The Drugs Branch also requires chemicals to be labeled appropriately, to make it more difficult to divert them to illicit uses. Labels must name the substance, state that it is a "drug precursor" and be affixed prior to supply. This requirement excludes mixtures as long as they are compounded in a way to prevent the extraction of the precursor.

According to the Home Office, contraventions of the law and/or conditions of a license may result in the institution of criminal proceedings and/or revocation of the license, although minor and/or inadvertent contraventions will normally result in a verbal or written warning. In addition, there are provisions to seize any material that is being diverted for illicit purposes.

Once precursors reach the retail end of the production chain, however, there is less control. Ephedrine is treated as a prescription drug, but pseudoephedrine hydrochloride and other precursors, such as red phosphorous and crystal iodine, can be purchased without controls by UK consumers.

In November 2006, police in West London conducted one of the largest raids to date on a suspected supplier of meth precursors. Members of the Serious Organized Crime Agency seized 16 kg of red phosphorus and unspecified amounts of crystal iodine and ammonia. A chemist was arrested on suspicion of aiding and abetting production of a controlled drug through his online chemical supply business.

The Home Office reports annually to the International Narcotics Control Board on the manufacture, supply, importation, exportation and destruction of all controlled drugs and precursor chemicals within the UK.

End Text.

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